

GOLDEN GAZETTE

A Monthly Newspaper for Senior Adults in the Fairfax Area

MARCH 2005

Serving Seniors for 28 Years

VOL. 28, NO. 11

Giving Up the Car Keys: When Is the Right Time?

by Granger Benson, M.D.

It's a fact: certain changes that accompany aging can affect our ability to operate a motor vehicle. At some point, seniors are wiser to stop driving than to put themselves and others at risk. But driving is of great practical importance to most of us. How do we know when it's truly time to give up the car keys?

Let's first review a few more facts about senior drivers. The crash rate per licensed driver over 65 is the lowest of any age group. But that doesn't tell the whole story because as people age, they voluntarily cut down the miles they drive. The crash rate per mile driven actually rises in old age. By the time seniors reach 85, their average crash rate per mile exceeds that of teenagers, who are unquestionably the most dangerous group on the road.

Another sobering fact is that seniors are much more likely to be severely injured or die in an accident than younger drivers. The fatality rate per driver and per mile is higher among those over 85 than any other age group. So, there are good statistical reasons for many seniors to cut back or stop driving. Why are seniors more at risk?

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This is an abridged version with links to senior centers and county tours. Policy prohibits publishing the ads that are included in the print version.

If you would like to receive the print version on a monthly basis, please e-mail kathy.wilson@fairfaxcounty.gov. Large print and recorded formats also are available. See page 2 for additional contact information.

Emergency Ambulance Service Billing Begins April 1



Emergency Ambulance Service billing will begin on April 1, 2005, in Fairfax County. Fire Chief Michael P. Neuhard says: "Fairfax County residents who have Medicare, Medicaid, or other medical insurance will not pay any costs for ambulance transport—insurance payments will be accepted as payment in full. Uninsured residents will be treated with compassion to ensure financial hardship is avoided."

According to Chief Neuhard, "Using a 'service first' policy, the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department strives to provide the best emergency medical service possible for its residents and visitors."

As a county resident, your insurance company, Medicare, or Medicaid will be charged for emergency ambulance service to a medical facility. A hardship waiver form will be available for residents who need one. When no one is taken to a medical facility, there will be no charge for care provided.

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GOLDEN GAZETTE

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Department of Family Services

FAIRFAX AREA AGENCY ON AGING

12011 Government Center Parkway

Suite #708

Fairfax, VA 22035-1104

Telephone: 703-324-5411

Toll-Free: 1-866-503-0217

TTY: 703-449-1186

FAX: 703-449-8689

Web Site: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/service/aaa

The *Golden Gazette* is a free, monthly newspaper dedicated to serving persons age 60 and over in Fairfax County and the cities of Fairfax and Falls Church.

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Publication of advertising contained herein does not constitute endorsement.



To comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act, the *Golden Gazette* is available in large-print and recorded formats. Call **703-324-5633** to request an alternative format.

DEADLINES

ALWAYS the first of the month a month in advance (for ads, ad payments, and announcements)

Issue

April

May

June

Due Date

March 1

April 1

May 1

ADDRESS ADDITIONS/CORRECTIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Although the *Golden Gazette* accepts limited paid advertisements, reader contributions are critical to ensure continuation of the publication. We are very grateful to all of you who do send contributions, regardless of the amount (the average contribution is about \$7.00). **Please note that contributions are entirely voluntary.**

If you have an address change, are receiving duplicates, or if you would like to make a contribution, please complete the form below and mail to: ***Golden Gazette, Area Agency on Aging, 12011 Government Center Parkway, Suite 708, Fairfax, VA 22035-1104.*** Checks should be made payable to **Fairfax County**. Please list your current address below or attach your mailing label and check the appropriate lines. If you prefer to call about address changes, the number is **703-324-5633**.

____ Contribution check attached.

____ I am NOT currently on your mailing list. Please add my name and address.

____ I am already on your mailing list.

____ I am moving. My new address in the Fairfax area will be:

NAME _____

CURRENT ADDRESS _____

Zip: _____

NEW ADDRESS (if applicable) _____

Zip: _____

TELEPHONE (in case we have a question) _____

The names and addresses of persons receiving the *Golden Gazette* are subject to disclosure pursuant to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, VA Code Sec. 2.1-340 thru 346.1. Inquiries or complaints concerning this policy should be directed to the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging, 12011 Government Center Parkway, #708, Fairfax, VA 22035-1104.

The Fairfax Area Agency on Aging contracts with Southern Maryland Printing in Waldorf, MD, for printing and mailing services.

Location Change for Commission on Aging Meeting

The Fairfax Area Commission on Aging (COA) will meet on **Wednesday, March 16, at 1:00 p.m.**, at the Wakefield Senior Center (located in the Audrey Moore RECenter, 8100 Braddock Road, Annandale). A public comment period is held at the beginning of each meeting. (Note: The COA meets on the third Wednesday of each month, **except August.**)

Call **703-324-7746** for information or to be placed on the mailing list. If you need a sign language interpreter or any special accommodation or auxiliary aid, please call the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging at **703-324-5411** (voice) or **703-449-1186** (TTY) at least five working days in advance of the meeting. There is no charge for these services.

PREPLANNING YOUR FUNERAL SAVES LOVED ONES STRESS AND MONEY

Provided by Tim Murray, CFP®

Planning your own funeral is a task few of us wish to tackle. Yet funerals can be a major expense for many families, and advance planning can save your estate money and your loved ones a lot of emotional stress.

Here are a few tips for preplanning a funeral so that you have the funeral that you (or the terminal person for whom you are planning it) desire at the best price.

The average cost for a funeral, according to the National Funeral Directors Association, is \$6,500. But that doesn't include such things as the cemetery plot, the grave marker, and miscellaneous expenses such as flowers. Choosing expensive options can easily push the cost of a funeral over \$10,000.

The surviving loved ones must make these decisions very quickly after death, at a time they are grieving. It's common for them to "prove their love" by buying an expensive casket and service, even though they may end up spending far more than the deceased would have chosen. That's why preplanning can help make this inevitable event far less stressful for your loved ones.

Preplanning doesn't mean simply telling your family what you want for your funeral. You need to actively shop and price. Otherwise you may "want" a funeral that is far more expensive than you realize or that your estate can afford.

Start with a funeral home's price list. Federal rules require all funeral homes to provide a specific, detailed price list for their goods and services. You don't have to select every item on the list, either.

Keep in mind that most states don't require the use of a funeral home for a service. You or your church may want to simply hold a memorial service without the body present, thus eliminating the need for embalming, an expensive casket, or attending funeral staff.

Shop around. The cost of funeral home services can vary widely. Caskets are a partic-

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MEDICARE GENERAL ENROLLMENT PERIOD

If you did not enroll for Medicare Part B when you first became eligible, you may enroll during the General Enrollment Period:

- The General Enrollment Period runs from January 1 through March 31 of each year.
- To apply, call the Social Security Administration at **1-800-772-1213**. TTY users should call **1-800-325-0778**. If you get benefits from the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB), call your local RRB office or **1-800-808-0772**.
- Your Part B coverage will start on July 1 of the year you sign up. The cost of Medicare Part B will go up 10% for each full 12-month period that you could have had Medicare Part B but didn't take it, except in special cases. You will have to pay this extra amount as long as you have Medicare Part B.
- The General Enrollment Period is also the time when you may apply for Medicare Part A if for some reason you were not eligible to receive Medicare Part A due to a lack of creditable payroll contributions.

Source: Medicare & You 2005 Handbook.

Caregivers Grant Program Is Back!

The Virginia Caregivers Grant Program provides annual grants of up to \$500 to caregivers who provide unpaid care to a needy relative. Grants are awarded for care provided for at least six months of the previous calendar year. The caregiver and person receiving care must be related by blood, marriage, or adoption and reside in Virginia. The caregiver's annual income cannot be more than \$50,000.

The Virginia Department of Social Services will accept applications until May 1. Applications postmarked after May 1 will be disqualified.

For an application or information, call the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging at **703-324-5485**. Applications also may be downloaded from www.dss.state.va.us/family/as/caregivegrant.html.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

One of the best ways to spend your time is to volunteer. Everyone benefits from volunteering. The agencies receive the help they need, and the volunteers receive satisfaction from helping others.

The **Center for Multicultural Human Services** needs volunteers to be mentors in the CHAMPS program. Mentors provide children of prisoners in Northern Virginia with friendship, recreational activities, and constructive example. Call Ellen Klene at **703-533-3302, Ext.107**.

The **Literacy Council of Northern Virginia** needs volunteers to teach English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. Volunteers teach foreign-born adults to read, write, speak, and understand English. Training is provided. Volunteers also are needed to tutor in libraries and other public places. Call Ellen Bloom at **703-237-0866**.

The **Meals on Wheels** program needs volunteers to deliver meals in the Centreville/Chantilly area. Drivers deliver meals once a month on weekdays from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Call the Volunteer Intake Line at **703-324-5406**.

The **National Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Society** has volunteer opportunities to assist with its 17th annual MS Walk on April 9 & 10 (there are six walk sites to choose from) and with their MS 150 Bike Tour on May 21 & 22. Volunteers are needed to host rest stops, run check in, drive support vehicles, and more. Call **202-296-5363**.

Opportunities, Alternatives & Resources (OAR) of Fairfax County provides positive influences on the lives of offenders in the Fairfax County jail and their families. OAR needs volunteers to conduct one-to-one mentoring sessions with inmates and teach classes in the jail. Volunteers also can work with families of offenders during visiting hours in the Adult Detention Center. Training will be held in April. Call **703-246-3033**.

The **Volunteer Home Services for Seniors** program needs volunteers in the Route 1 area

to provide transportation for seniors. In the Falls Church area, volunteers are needed for a variety of jobs, including grocery shopping, light housework, yard work, and providing transportation. Call the Volunteer Intake Line at **703-324-5406**.

To have a volunteer opportunity considered for this column, e-mail or fax your submission to **Retha Lockhart** by the first of the month one month in advance.

E-mail:

retha.lockhart@fairfaxcounty.gov

Fax: 703-449-8689

Phone: 703-324-5407

OLLI-GMU Holds Spring Registration

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at George Mason University (OLLI-GMU) serves the Northern Virginia community by providing intellectual and cultural experiences for residents in their retirement years.

OLLI is a nonprofit organization funded through annual membership dues and grants. An OLLI membership guarantees you a wide variety of classes, special events and new friends.

Registration for the 2005 spring term begins March 28, 2005. For more information, please call: **703-503-3384** or visit the Web site at ***www.lli.gmu.edu***.

Let's Play Ball! Northern Virginia Senior Softball (NVSS) seeks men 50+ and women 40+ to play two 7-inning slow-pitch softball games on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. For information, call Dave Scheele at **703-524-5576** or Joyce Pfeffer at **703-860-1876**.

Seniors May Be Eligible for Food Stamp Benefits

The Virginia Department of Social Services is encouraging senior citizens throughout the state to apply for food stamps. For whatever reasons, senior citizens have tended to shy away from this program even when eligible. Perhaps it was the cumbersome application process and the need to pick up the stamps that discouraged applicants. Read on to hear what has changed in this important program.

It is no longer necessary to pick up paper food stamps. Recipients now use a plastic swipe card (much like a credit card) to pay for purchases at the grocery store. Each month the amount of food stamp benefits is electronically credited to the card's account. A Personal Identification Number (PIN) is used to access the food stamp card's account. Yes, it's a new skill for some of us, but don't be discouraged by this new requirement. Once you do it a few times, you'll find it's simple, and training is offered to get you up to speed on this process.

The entire food stamp benefit does not have to be used in the same month, allowing recipients to save up for occasions when they will need extra food. The card must be used at least every 60 days to remain active, but a purchase of just a loaf of bread or a carton of eggs will count as a transaction. This allows the rest of the benefits to roll over into the next month's allotment.

Disabled seniors can apply for food stamps by mailing their applications and completing phone interviews with eligibility workers. It is no longer necessary to go to your local social services department if this creates a hardship for you. On your application, make a note to inform social services staff that you will need a phone interview.

Disabled seniors who are physically unable to shop or cook should consider applying for food stamps separately from the rest of the household. Depending on income levels of the household, the disabled individual may

qualify for food stamps that would not have been available if the household had applied.

Be sure to provide proof of medical expenses to your eligibility worker so that you can get the full deductions entitled to you. Ask your pharmacy for a list of your medication expenses for the past year. This information is extremely important and can have a big impact on the amount of food stamps you will receive. Rent, mortgage, and utility expenses are other important deductions to provide to your worker.

Take a step-by-step approach to the food stamp application and don't be discouraged by the length of the application. This is an important benefit.

If you find that you cannot complete the application on your own, please call Senior Connections, the Capital Area Agency on Aging's Care Coordination Department, at its toll-free number **1-800-989-2286**, or 1-804-343-3000.

Source: Betty Wilton from Senior Connections, Capital Area Agency on Aging, wrote this article for their Mature Life publication.

For information on food stamps in the Fairfax area, call the Department of Family Services at:

Fairfax	703-324-7500
Falls Church	703-533-5300
Reston	703-787-4900
South County	703-704-6353

Preplanning Your Funeral Cont. From p. 3

ular area where costs can be dramatically cut, without sacrificing the deceased's desires. The cost of caskets at a large Midwestern funeral home, for example, runs from a low of \$700 to a high of \$15,500. Third-party casket stores, including some online, have entered the market in recent years, selling caskets well below the cost of what many funeral homes charge. The funeral home must use that casket without charging a handling fee.

Know what you are required by law to have and what isn't required. Two examples are embalming and "grave liners." State laws typically don't require embalming, if the burial is within two to three days of death. As for grave or vault liners, or what the funeral industry calls "outer burial containers," state laws again typically don't require it. But most cemeteries require some sort of liner so that the ground doesn't eventually settle over the grave, but that can be relatively inexpensive. Yet as with caskets, liner costs range widely, from less than \$1,000 to over \$8,000.

Consider Cremation. It's generally less expensive than a "full-service funeral" that includes a casket and burial, though this increasingly popular choice is certainly not for everyone.

Should You Prepay. There are several ways to prefund a funeral, from paying the funeral home directly to buying a dedicated life insurance policy, to establishing your own investment account for that purpose. Each has their pros and cons. But what is certain is that preplanning presents the opportunity to set aside money for the inevitable expenses, again potentially saving your loved ones money and stress.

Look for Financial Help. Social Security pays its beneficiaries a small death benefit. Also, veterans are entitled to a free burial and grave marker in a national cemetery.

Ultimately, the issue of preplanning your funeral isn't what you spend for it but whether what is spent buys the type of funeral and burial that you want and can afford. If you

desire a lavish funeral with an expensive casket and a high-cost location within the cemetery, and you can afford it, that's fine. If you prefer cremation or a "party" without the traditional funeral, that's fine, too.

What you don't want is to force your surviving loved ones into "guessing" your wishes and making potentially expensive financial decisions under severe stress.

Source: This column is produced by the Financial Planning Association, the membership organization for the financial planning community, and is provided by: Tim Murray, CFP®, CSA, an independent Certified Financial Planner™ practitioner and Certified Senior Advisor with Capital Planning & Investments in Fairfax, Virginia. Tim offers consultations on an hourly basis in his office located in the City of Fairfax. He may be reached by phone at 703-352-3337 or by e-mail at: TMurray@CapitalPlanningDirect.com.

March is Red Cross Month

This year's theme is preparedness. The American Red Cross is encouraging individuals, businesses, and communities to take responsibility for their safety and that of their families, homes, and their neighborhoods by following these basic steps:

- ❖ Make a plan. Design a Family (Home) Disaster Plan. Work with neighbors and co-workers to create a Community and Workplace Disaster Plan.
- ❖ Build a kit. Assemble Disaster Supply Kits that contain items that people may need (1) if confined to their home or place of business for an extended period or (2) if they are told to evacuate on short notice.
- ❖ Get trained. Learn to save lives. The Red Cross offers classes year round to individuals and businesses on first aid, CPR, defibrillator use, and much more.
- ❖ Give blood and give time by volunteering.

BE PREPARED—BE SAFE!

B.J. ANDERSON—VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

by Chris Williams, Volunteer Reporter

Volunteers working with the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging come in all sizes and ages, and B.J. Anderson is the youngest volunteer working with us. B.J. began working for the Volunteer Home Services for Seniors (VHS) program last year during the summer when he was home on vacation from the University of Virginia. He also volunteered during his winter break from school.

B.J.'s interest in working with seniors began when he worked at the Greenspring Retirement Village in Springfield during two summers earlier in his college career. He is a chemical engineering student at the University of Virginia and has signed up to join the Navy to become an officer after graduation. His military commitment provides him with financial assistance for college expenses. This has given him the opportunity of not working during school breaks. It was his mother, Rite Anderson, who suggested that he instead use his summer breaks to volunteer.

After looking over the list of volunteer opportunities that his mother compiled, B.J. chose the VHS program. This program provides assistance to seniors so that they can remain independent while living in their homes. B.J. has driven senior clients to medical appointments, run errands, worked on home repairs and gardening projects, and dug out tree stumps. He is a jack-of-all-trades because many times he does not know exactly what he will be doing until he arrives at the senior's home.

His easygoing personality is a plus for him in his volunteer role. Sometimes traffic may cause him to run late while transporting a client to an appointment, but he remains calm and always seems to get to the destination on time. Gardening projects sometimes are challenging because the project starts on a small scale and expands as it goes on. But he always gets the job done, and his clients rave about his work and ask for him to return again. The best aspect about volunteering in the VHS program for B.J.



(Photo by Chris Williams)

B.J. Anderson, VHS Volunteer

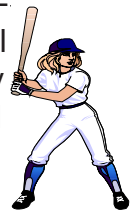
is that he gets time to really get acquainted with the seniors he helps and spend time talking with them.

B.J. is a graduate of Thomas Jefferson High School. Once he graduates from UVA in May, he will join the Navy and go to Officer Candidate School. In the meantime, he enjoys a friendly rivalry with his brother, Ben, who attends Virginia Tech. He also has a younger sister, Mary Carol, who lives at home with his parents, Craig and Rite Anderson, who reside in the Burke area.

Golden Girls of Northern Virginia Need New Players

The Golden Girls of Northern Virginia, a senior women's softball league, is looking for players. Any lady over the age of 40 is encouraged to join. All skill levels are welcome. The league plays on Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings in Vienna.

For more information, please call Donna at **703-938-0387** and check out the Web site at www.goldengirls.org.



SENIOR CENTER HIGHLIGHTS



These programs are administered by the Department of Community & Recreation Services, with the exceptions of the City of Fairfax and the City of Falls Church senior centers and the Gum Springs Community Center. If participation accommodations are needed in accordance with the Americans With Disabilities Act, please call 703-324-5544 or TTY 703-222-9693 at least 10 working days in advance of the event. **All events are free unless otherwise noted.** The symbol RR means reservations are required. These are just a few of the activities offered. Call the center nearest you for a complete listing or if you have questions.

<u>Bailey's</u> <i>Bailey's Community Center</i> 5920 Summers Lane <i>Bailey's Crossroads, VA 22041</i> Phone: 703-820-2131	Mon. 3/7	12:30 p.m., <i>Over-the-Counter Pain Medications</i> by CVS.
	Thur. 3/17	1:00 p.m., St. Patrick's Day Celebration.
	Fri. 3/18	11:30 a.m., American Steak & Buffet. \$10. (RR)
	Fri. 3/25	12:30 p.m., Celebrate the Center's 29 th Anniversary With Cake and Punch.
	Mon. 3/28	11:30 a.m., Easter Egg Hunt With Head Start Classes.
<u>City of Fairfax</u> 4401 Sideburn Road Fairfax, VA 22030 Phone: 703-359-2487 Upcoming: Wednesdays, 3/30-4/13, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., FREE Intermediate Contract Bridge Lessons.	Wednesdays	11:00 a.m., Easy Strength Training With Judy & Terry.
	Wed. 3/2	10:30 a.m., Financial Seminar: <i>Tax Relief, Reverse Mortgages, Federal & State Tax Issues.</i>
	Wed. 3/9	10:00 a.m., Trip to Woodlawn Plantation's 42 nd Annual Needlework Exhibition. \$9. Lunch on Your Own. (RR)
	Sat. 3/19	9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., 1 st Annual Flea Market. Rent Tables for Small Fee. Call for Information.
	Wed. 3/30	11:00 a.m., Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon. \$3. (RR)
<u>City of Falls Church</u> 223 Little Falls Street (Next to City Hall) Falls Church, VA 22046 Phone: 703-248-5020/5021 <u>Reservations are required</u> for all trips, programs, and guest speakers.	Fri. 3/11	10:15 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Lee's Mansion. \$1 Transportation.
	Fri. 3/11	1:00-2:30 p.m., <i>Advance Directives</i> by Capital Hospice.
	Thur. 3/17	11:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m., St. Patrick's Day Party.
	Mon. 3/21	8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Charles Town Races and Slots. \$26 Includes Motorcoach. (RR by March 14)
	Mon. 3/21	10:00-11:00 a.m., <i>Diabetes 101</i> by American Diabetes Association.
	Fri. 3/25	10:30-11:30 a.m., Armchair Travel: Israel.
	Wed. 3/30	10:15 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Trip: Wegmans. \$1 Transportation.
<u>Franconia/Springfield</u> Lane Elementary School 7137 Beulah St. Alexandria, VA 22315 Phone: 703-924-9762	Wed. 3/2	12:30 p.m., African Safari Slide Show With Dexter.
	Mon. 3/7	10:30 a.m., Chair Jazzercise. Have Fun and Get Fit!
	Tue. 3/15	12:45 p.m., <i>Nocturnal Leg Cramps</i> by CVS.
	Wed. 3/16	10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Entertainment With Steve.
	Mon. 3/21	10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Lunch at Old Country Buffet. \$TBA. (RR)
<u>Groveton at South County</u> 8350 Richmond Highway Ste. 325 Alexandria, VA 22309 Phone: 703-704-6216	Mon./Wed./Fri.	10:30-11:00 a.m., Mat Exercise.
	Tuesdays	1:00-1:45 p.m., Conversational Spanish.
	Wednesdays	10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Bridge.
	Thursdays	12:30-2:00 p.m., Sewing Club.
	Mon. 3/21	10:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Lunch at Old Country Buffet. \$TBA. (RR)

S E N I O R C E N T E R

Gum Springs

Gum Springs Community Center
8100 Fordson Road
Alexandria, VA 22306
Phone: 703-360-6088

Mondays	10:00 a.m., Sewing and Quilting.
Tuesdays	10:30 a.m., Ceramics.
Wednesdays	10:30 a.m., Shopping/Bowling (Alexandria Bowling Center).
Thursdays	1:00 p.m., Bingo.
Fridays	10:00 a.m., Low-Impact Exercise.

Hollin Hall

1500 Shenandoah Road
Alexandria, VA 22308
Phone: 703-765-4573

Tue.	3/1	8:10 a.m., Signup for Beginning Tai Chi Class—1-Year Commitment. (RR)
Wed.	3/9	1:00 p.m., Officers Kottemann and Cook: <i>Community Safety Issues</i> . (RR)
Mon.	3/14	1:00-3:00 p.m., St. Patrick's Day Celebration. (RR)
{ Mon.	3/21	10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., 2-Day AARP Driver Safety
{ Thur.	3/24	Program. \$10. To Register, Call 703-204-3366.
Tue.	3/29	10:00 a.m., Disaster Preparedness for Seniors. (RR)
Thur.	3/31	1:00 p.m., <i>Year-Round Skin Care</i> by CVS. (RR)

James Lee

James Lee Community Center
2855 Annandale Road
Falls Church, VA 22042
Phone: 703-534-3387

Mondays	10:30 a.m., Gentle Yoga.
Tuesdays	1:00 p.m., Bingo.
Wednesdays	1:00 p.m., Stretch for Flexibility Class.
Thursdays	11:30 a.m., Intergenerational Program.
Fridays	1:00 p.m., Ballroom Dancing Class.

Lewinsville

1609 Great Falls Street
McLean, VA 22101
Phone: 703-442-9075

Thur.	3/3	9:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Free Glucose Testing by Care-givers Home Health Testing (2-hour fast prior to test).
Tue.	3/8	12:15 p.m., <i>Year-Round Skin Care</i> by CVS.
Thur.	3/17	11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., St. Patrick's Day Party.
Mon.	3/28	10:30 a.m., Easter Egg Hunt.
Thur.	3/31	12:30 p.m., Birthday Celebrations.

Lincolnia

4710 North Chambliss St.
Alexandria, VA 22312
Phone: 703-914-0223

Tuesdays	10:00 a.m., Square Dance (Fee).	
Tue.	3/8	10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Blood Pressure Screen—Walk In.
Fri.	3/18	10:30 a.m., Saint Patrick's Day Party. (RR)
Tue.	3/22	10:30 a.m., <i>Year-Round Skin Care</i> by CVS. (RR)
Fri.	3/25	1:00 p.m., Birthday Celebration/Welcoming of New Members. (RR)

Little River Glen

4001 Barker Court
Fairfax, VA 22032
Phone: 703-503-8703

Wed.	3/2	11:00 a.m., <i>Eating & Swallowing Safety—Do You Have Trouble Swallowing?</i> by Susan Wranik.
Tue.	3/8	11:00 a.m., <i>Year-Round Skin Care</i> by CVS.
Thur.	3/10	10:00 a.m., Oil Painting—Even If You've Never Held a Brush. (RR)
Fri.	3/11	10:00 a.m., VIB (Visually Impaired/Blind Adult) Support Group.
Thur.	3/17	11:30 a.m., Red Hat Society Get-Together.

HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED

Lorton
7722 Gunston Plaza
Lorton, VA 22079
Phone: 703-550-7195

Fridays 12:30 p.m., Pinochle Group. Begins March 4. (RR)
 Wed. 3/2 9:30 a.m., Tai Chi & Qigong Classes. \$5/Quarter. (RR)
 Mon. 3/7 10:00 a.m., Computer 2 Class, Covers Scanning, Digital Photography, and Internet. \$5/8 Classes. (RR)
 Mon. 3/7 12:30 p.m., Line Dancing Class. Have Fun and Exercise, Too. \$5/Quarter. (RR)
 Wed. 3/9 12:30 p.m., Healthy Hearing Screening. (RR)

Pimmit Hills
7510 Lisle Avenue
Falls Church, VA 22043
Phone: 703-734-3338

Fri. 3/4 10:30 a.m., Asian Food Shopping. \$1 Bus.
 Mon. 3/7 11:00 a.m., Jazzercise Class.
 Mon. 3/14 1:00 p.m., Line Dancing Class.
 Wed. 3/23 1:00 p.m., Shuffleboard—Inside.
 Wed. 3/30 10:30 a.m., Tour of Masonic Temple. \$1 Bus. (RR)

Reston-Herndon
1850 Cameron Glen Drive
Reston, VA 22091
Phone: 703-481-4200

Thur. 3/3 7:00 p.m., Caregiver's Support Group.
 Tue. 3/8 12:30 p.m., *Nocturnal Leg Cramps* by CVS.
 Wed. 3/16 12:30 p.m., *Dietary Supplements* by Nutritionist.
 Thur. 3/17 11:00 a.m., Everyone-Is-Irish Day.
 Fri. 3/25 12:30 p.m., Try a New Game—TRIBOND!

Sully
5690 Sully Road
Centreville, VA 20124
Phone: 703-322-4475/4479

Mon. 3/7 11:00 a.m., *Nocturnal Leg Cramps* by CVS.
 Tue. 3/8 10:00 a.m., Stretch With Me & Yoga.
 Thur. 3/17 12:30 p.m., Game Challenge.
 Fri. 3/25 10:30 a.m., Nail Painting With Angie.
 Wed. 3/30 10:00 a.m., Line Dancing With the Cascade Steppers.

Wakefield
Audrey Moore RECenter
8100 Braddock Road
Annandale, VA 22003
Phone: 703-321-3000

Mon. 3/7 11:00 a.m., Speaker From Fairfax Fire & Rescue. (RR)
 Mon. 3/14 10:15 a.m., Movies and Popcorn. (RR)
 Thur. 3/17 11:00 a.m., St. Patrick's Day Party. Nostalgic Music With Jasmine. (RR)
 Fri. 3/18 1:00 p.m., *Insomnia* by CVS. (RR)
 Mon. 3/21 11:00 a.m., Presentation: *Senior Adults and HIV/AIDS*.

Additional Locations for Meals/Other Activities

David R. Pinn
Community Center
10225 Zion Drive
Fairfax, VA 22032
Phone: 703-250-9181

Huntington Community
Center
5751 Liberty Drive
Alexandria, VA 22303
Phone: 703-960-1917

If you prefer the *Golden Gazette* in large print, call 703-324-5633.

FREE HOME REPAIRS

Fairfax County's Home Repair for the Elderly Program provides free home repairs to homeowners who are 62 or older, and/or handicapped or disabled; and have a maximum income of \$40,250 for 1 person*, or \$46,000 for 2 persons.*

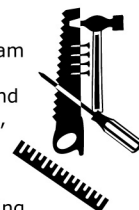
Typical services include:

- Minor electrical repair • Plumbing work • Painting
- Repairing steps, floors, etc. • Installing ramps and grab bars

Fairfax County Residents - Apply now for **FREE REPAIRS**

Call 703-246-5154 TTY: 703-385-3578

* Other restrictions apply.



Giving Up the Car Keys Cont. From p. 1

Causes of Impaired Driving

Driving is a complex act involving the coordinated function of many physical, mental, and sensory processes. Good vision is critical—not just visual acuity, but also peripheral vision, spatial vision, glare sensitivity, dark adaptation and movement detection. These visual functions often deteriorate with aging, especially when disorders of the ocular lens or retina are present.

Optimal mental performance also is necessary to safe driving. Driving requires that we be able to quickly access stored memories to deal with road or traffic conditions; process complicated information and make correct decisions; analyze unexpected situations and respond appropriately. These capabilities can decline with aging, especially in the presence of dementia and other disorders that affect memory and/or mental function.

Physical performance, including flexibility, strength and quickness, is of course necessary. A great many conditions common to seniors can affect physical performance. Arthritis, stroke, neuropathy, Parkinson's disease and spine disorders are just a few examples.

Warning Signs of Impaired Driving

How do seniors know if a driving safety problem exists? Here are some warning signs to look out for. It's a good idea for senior drivers to observe these warning signs for themselves or in others. Some experts suggest making a written log to monitor driving performance over time.

- Nervousness about driving in general or about specific situations like maneuvering through busy intersections, driving on interstate roads or merging into traffic
- Failing to notice traffic signals/posted signs
- Reacting too slowly to unexpected conditions
- Incorrect signaling
- Difficulty managing turns
- Confusion at exits
- Hitting curbs
- Parking inappropriately

- Becoming lost in familiar areas
- Increased agitation or irritation when driving
- Confusing the brake and gas pedal
- Scrapes and dents on the car, mailbox, or garage
- Near misses/fender-benders
- Other drivers honking at you more often
- Friends/relatives unwilling to drive with you.

Things You Can Do

The decision to drive or not drive does not always have to be all or nothing. Of course, seniors with obvious health impairments or clear warning signs should certainly not be behind the wheel. But most people can make sensible adjustments over time to reduce driving risk without necessarily giving up the keys entirely. Here are some suggestions:

- Educate yourself. One good resource is the Virginia GrandDriver program. For information, call the Virginia Department for the Aging at 1-800-552-3402, or check the Web site at www.granddriver.net.
- Take a refresher driving course. Call AARP at **1-888-227-7669** for classes in your area. ***(In this issue, see page 9, Hollin Hall; page 15; and page 17, March 22 & 24.)***
- Limit driving to less busy areas and times of the day. Avoid rush hour. Stay home on rainy or snowy days.
- Try not to drive at dusk or at night.
- Enlist friends or relatives to drive you to appointments, shopping, church or social events. Use taxi services or public transportation. If you live in a retirement community, take advantage of its shuttle service, if available.
- Arrange for services to be provided in the home that would otherwise require driving, e.g., home delivery of groceries/medications, and/or use errand services.

Above all, don't ignore driving problems until it's too late. Your own safety and that of others may be at stake.

Source: Dr. Benson is an internal medicine physician and president of Ready Hands, Inc., a Fairfax County company that provides companion care, personal assistance, and other services to help seniors remain safely independent at home.

Roadwise Review—A Tool to Help Seniors Drive Longer

The February *Golden Gazette* (page 16) announced a new tool offered by the American Automobile Association (AAA) to help senior drivers stay safe longer by permitting them to assess their skills in the privacy of their homes. This home-based, user-friendly screening software is based on a battery of functional tests that were validated in a 6-year cooperative research project between the National Highway Transportation and Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration, with additional support from the National Institute on Aging. The measures include:

- *Leg Strength and General Mobility.*
- *Head/Neck Flexibility*
- *High Contrast Visual Acuity*
- *Low Visual Acuity*
- *Working Memory*
- *Visualization of Missing Information*
- *Visual Search*
- *Visual Information Processing Speed .*

At the conclusion of each of the eight skill tests, a summary of results is displayed along with advice as to what the test taker should do. Many visual, medical, and physical rehabilitation options are available that can add substantially to the safe driving years of normally-aging individuals. Depending on the measure and the level of impairment, a user may be referred to a physician, occupational therapist, certified driving rehabilitation specialist, etc. For instance, poor results on a vision test might suggest visiting an optometrist.

The cost is \$9.99 for AAA members and \$15 for nonmembers. It may be ordered online at http://www.aaamidatlantic.com/safety/roadwise_review.asp or purchased at an AAA retail office. There are two offices in the area:

1. 4100 Monument Corner Drive, Fairfax, VA; 703-222-4200.
2. 801 N. Fairfax Street, Alexandria, VA; 703-549-1080.

Monthly Support Groups

✱ The **Amputee Support Group of Northern Virginia** meets on the first Tuesday of every month, 7:30-9:00 p.m., at the Telestar Court Building, 2990 Telestar Ct., Gemini Room, Falls Church. Contact Irvin Axelrod at **703-222-7120** or asgnva@earthlink.net.

✱ The **Fibromyalgia/Arthritis Support Group** meets on the second Thursday of the month, 1:00 p.m., at Sherwood Library, 2101 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria. Call Barbara at **703-913-0890**.

✱ The **Mended Hearts Support Group** meets on the first Wednesday of the month, 7:30-9:00 p.m., at the Telestar Court Building, 2990 Telestar Ct., Gemini Room, Falls Church. Contact John Braddon, **703-385-9694** or jbraddon@cox.net.

✱ The **Neuropathy Organization of Northern Virginia** meets on the second Saturday of the month, 1:30-3:30 p.m., at 2990 Telestar Court, Falls Church. Call Mary Baldrige, **703-491-6690**, or Joanne Holman, **703-998-8143**.

✱ The **Northern Virginia Post-Polio Support Group** meets on the second Saturday of each month, 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m., at the Mason Government Center, Annandale. Call **703-560-8852**.

✱ The **Northern Virginia Support Group of the Well Spouse Foundation (WSF)** meets on the third Monday of the month, 7:00-9:00 p.m., in Supervisor Bulova's Conference Room, at the Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. The WSF supports spousal caregivers for the chronically ill or disabled. Call **703-425-2430**.

✱ The **Parkinson's Disease Care Partners Support Group** meets on the third Wednesday of the month, 7:30 p.m., at Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Avenue, McLean. Call **703-891-0821**.

✱ **Widow/Widower Support Groups** meet on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month, 7:30-9:00 p.m. Sponsored by Haven of Northern Virginia, 4606 Ravensworth Road, Annandale. Call **703-941-7000**.

Ambulance Billing Cont. From p. 1

Dan Schmidt, spokesman, Fairfax County Fire and Rescue says: "When residents have an emergency, we want them to call 9-1-1 without hesitation. No one should ever hesitate to call 9-1-1 because of inability to pay or lack of insurance."

Frequently Asked Questions

How does billing work? After patient care is provided, insurance information will be obtained routinely, often at the hospital. The county has contracted with a company to handle emergency ambulance service billing. Copayments and deductibles will be waived for county residents. Residents may receive an initial statement from the billing company. For uninsured county residents, the county has adopted a compassionate billing policy.

If I don't have health insurance, and cannot pay my bill, what options do I have? Patients taken to a medical facility by county ambulance who do not have health insurance will be sent a request for information that will include a financial hardship waiver form. The waiver form should be submitted to the billing company. The county will waive the ambulance service charge for financial hardship.

Will visitors or noncounty residents be charged a copayment? Yes, only county residents are eligible to have their copayments and deductibles waived.

What if my insurance company will not cover my emergency ambulance service bill? The county's billing service will attempt to gain all information required to show the medical necessity of the transport. However, if the claim is ultimately rejected, the department will consider the charge uncollectible for county residents.

If the copayment for emergency ambulance service is being waived, will there be any out-of-pocket expenses incurred for county residents? There will be no additional charges for emergency ambulance service for county residents who have health insurance, Medicare, or Medicaid.

What are the charges for emergency ambulance services? Charges include: \$300 for Basic Life Support (BLS) to a medical facility; \$400 for Advanced Life Support, Level 1 (ALS1), to a medical facility (serious medical problems or traumatic injury); \$550 for Advance Life Support, Level 2 (ALS2), to a medical facility (cardiac arrest); and \$7.50/mile, from pickup point to the hospital by county ambulance service.

How will my privacy be protected? All department members have been trained on patient privacy Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) requirements and will adhere strictly to those standards.

Whom should I call if I have a billing or insurance problem? The billing company will have customer service representatives to address billing and insurance questions. If you are not satisfied, you may contact the Fire and Rescue Department's Patient Advocate at **703-246-2266**.

Does this billing program cover all ambulance service in Fairfax County? It covers all ambulance services provided by the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department. It does not cover any privately provided ambulance services or charges.

For more information, questions, or to schedule a community presentation, call **703-246-2266**; TTY 711, or visit the Web site at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fire.

Affordable Senior Housing in Reston

Applications are being accepted at Lake Anne Fellowship House, a high-rise independent living complex. Efficiencies, studios, and one bedrooms rent from \$353-\$700 (includes all utilities, except cable). To request an application and brochure, call **703-471-6474** or write to: Lake Anne Fellowship House, 11450 North Shore Drive, Reston, VA 20190.

Reverse Mortgages Can Help Seniors Pay for Long-Term Care at Home

A recent study by the National Council on the Aging (NCOA) shows that reverse mortgages can be used by over 13 million Americans to pay for long-term care expenses at home, allowing many to remain independent and in their homes longer.

According to NCOA president and CEO James Firman: "The study shows that reverse mortgages have significant potential to help many seniors pay for help at home or to make home modifications. It also points to the need for strong consumer safeguards and lower transaction costs if these loans are to appeal to the millions of older Americans who could potentially benefit."

According to the study, there are some 9.8 million elder households (aged 62 and older) that are dealing with an impairment that can make it hard to live at home. In total, these households could access as much as \$695 billion through reverse mortgages. For individuals, the extra cash could go a long way to help with family caregiving and other long-term care expenses. For example, a borrower aged 75 years old with a home worth \$100,000 could receive a reverse mortgage loan that could pay them \$500 a month for almost 12 years.

"This is an important study that, for the first time, shows that elderly homeowners, many with chronic conditions, can use reverse mortgages to pay for care at home," said Jim Knickman, vice president for Research at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Reverse mortgages are loans that allow homeowners aged 62 and over to convert home equity into cash while living at home for as long as they want. Borrowers continue to own their homes, and can choose to receive the funds as a lump sum, line of credit, or as monthly payments (for up to life). The loan comes due only when the last borrower moves out, dies or sells the home. The "Use Your Home to Stay at Home: Expanding the Use of

Reverse Mortgages to Pay for Long-Term Care" report, funded by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, also shows how reverse mortgages can alleviate financial pressure not only for individuals and families, but also for state Medicaid programs and the federal government. Increasing the market for reverse mortgages could save Medicaid \$3.3 billion (with a 4% take-up rate) annually by 2010.

"Many seniors and their families can benefit from effective ways to pay for the long-term care services they need, in the setting they prefer," said Dr. Mark McClellan, administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

However, there are several obstacles to the increased use of reverse mortgages for this purpose. For example, the NCOA study shows that while two-thirds (67%) of older homeowners today have heard of a reverse mortgage, only 9% indicate that they are likely to use this financing option to pay for assistance at home. Many worry that they risk impoverishment, or won't be able to leave a legacy to their children if they tap home equity. The cost of these loans, and current Medicaid policies on how reverse mortgages affect eligibility for long-term care benefits, also appear to be barriers.

"We need expanded public education, and additional work to explore how to reduce the cost of tapping home equity, to strengthen consumer protections, and promote innovation," said Barbara Stucki, PhD, project manager for NCOA's Use Your Home to Stay at Home project. "Overcoming these obstacles will mean that reverse mortgages can play an important role in helping many older Americans pay for the supportive services they need to continue to live at home safely and comfortably."

Source: Our thanks to Gloria Cohan of Financial Freedom, for forwarding this press release from the National Council on the Aging (<http://www.ncoa.org/>).

Caregiver Seminars

Spring 2005 Series

Sponsored by the Fairfax Caregiver Seminar Consortium with funding from the National Family Caregiver Support Program, this seminar series will be held in April, May, and June.

Registration for these events is not required but strongly encouraged so that adequate handouts are available. To register or request accommodations, call the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging (AAA) at **703-324-5205** (TTY 703-449-1186). Leave your name, phone number, and the name of the session(s) that you plan to attend. More details about the seminars will be available on the AAA Web site: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/service/aaa.

Thursday, April 7. 3:00-4:30 p.m.

Lincolnia Senior Center, 4710 North Chamberliss Street, Alexandria. 703-914-0223.

Topic: *What to Expect as a Caregiver/Fostering Harmony in Decision Making.* An overview of what new and experienced care-givers may face will be presented along with strategies to reach decisions that everyone can live with.

Wednesday, April 13. 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. 703-978-5600.

Topic: *Transitions: When More Help is Needed.* How will you know when more help is needed? How can you evaluate the safety of the person and their functional and cognitive status? What are the options for care? What are the possible consequences of the choices you make? Learn how to assess the current situation, consider what services or options are available and prepare for future needs.

Tuesday, April 19. 12:00-1:00 p.m.

Falls Church Government Center, 6245 Leesburg Pike, 3rd Floor Conference Room, Falls Church. 703-533-5300.

Topic: *Strategies for Independent Living.*

Learn from the experts. From removing scatter rugs to installing handrails, this program will provide a variety of methods to increase home safety and functionality for older adults.

Wednesday, April 20. 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Little River Glen Senior Center, 4001 Barker Court, Fairfax. 703-503-8703.

Topic: *Introduction to the Legal/Financial Planning for Caregivers.* Learn important legal tools to aid in family decision-making, such as Powers of Attorney and Advanced Medical Directives, as well as financial planning during caregiving, e.g., cash flow, liquidity, and portfolio management.

Wednesday, April 27. 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Reston Senior Center, 1850 Cameron Glen Drive, Reston. 703-481-4200.

Topic: *Survival Tips for Family Caregivers.* Learn practical tips and helpful community resources to use when caring for a family member in the home.



AARP Safe Driver Program

2-Day Class

Sponsored by

Fairfax County Sheriff's Office

Date: March 21-22, 2005

Time: 10 a.m. -3 p.m. each day

Place: Fairfax County Criminal Justice Academy
14601 Lee Road, Chantilly

Cost: \$10

- Learn to avoid driving hazards
- Auto insurance discounts—consult your agent
- No tests!

Class size is limited. Advance registration is required. To register, call **703-246-3251** or e-mail douglas.byrd@fairfaxcounty.gov.

CAREGIVER'S CORNER

Hand in Hand: Sharing the Lessons of Dementia Care

The Alzheimer's Family Day Center (AFDC) is offering a 6-week series of 2-hour workshops to give caregivers T.I.P.S. (Tools, Ideas and Practical Steps) they can use to manage the everyday challenges of caring for a loved one with dementia. The workshops will be held March 15 through April 19, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

AFDC's unique approach to caregiver education gives students the opportunity to work hand-in-hand with our professional staff during an interactive observation session at our dementia-specific adult day center.

★ **March 15. First Things First: An Overview of Dementia.** "Why do you keep asking me that? Where are you going? I don't understand what you're trying to say." Does this sound familiar? This introduction to our series will include frank discussions of what caregivers can expect and an overview of the practical solutions we'll be offering throughout the course.

★ **March 22. Talking the Talk: Communication at Its Best.** Communication is the key to managing behavior, reducing frustrations and increasing insight. Learn our tried and true keys to communicating effectively: Task Breakdown, One Voice, Body Language, and Change Face.

★ **March 29. Role Reversal: Personal Care for Your Loved One.** Providing personal care for someone with dementia can be stressful for all involved. Learn strategies to ease the awkwardness of assisting with eating, dressing, and bathroom care.

★ **April 5. No Place Like Home: Managing the Home Environment.** Minor as well as major modifications to the home environment can make life easier for the whole household. A living solutions expert discusses how to make your home a safe and viable place for your loved one.

★ **April 12. Food for Thought: Maximizing Mealtime.** One of the most important yet challenging aspects of dementia care is proper nutrition for the whole family. Guest Chef Mike

Herbert of Nutritionally Yours will provide eating and dining tips, and demonstrate simple meals that are nutritious, easy to chew and swallow, and can be used with utensils or as finger foods. We also will explore the social challenges of dining in or outside of the home.

★ **April 19. Putting It All Together: Lessons Learned.** Using the skills gained from the course, students will have the opportunity to create a realistic daily schedule that incorporates the interests of the whole family while adapting to changing abilities and situations.

★ **Caregiving in Action (dates vary).** During the interactive observation session at our center, our program staff will coach caregivers through real-life scenarios and share knowledge acquired over 20 years of caring for the day-to-day needs of our participants. This course includes: six 2-hour sessions of classroom instruction with Susan Stone, Outreach Coordinator, and guest experts; one interactive observation session at the adult day center; and a copy of *Caregiving at a Glance*, our nationally recognized fingertip guide for caregivers, which will be used as the course text.

Registration deadline—March 8, 2005.

Cost: \$225. Make checks payable to Alzheimer's Family Day Center and write "Lessons" in the memo box. Mail check to: AFDC 2812 Old Lee Highway, Suite 210, Fairfax, VA 22031.

Contact Information:

Phone: 703-204-4664

Fax: 703-204-0509

E-mail: AFDC@alzheimersfdc.org

Web site: www.alzheimersfdc.org



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

March 5. 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. A Taste of McLean. Local restaurateurs and caterers offer generous samples of their specialties. Florists, food preparation and kitchen accessories retailers also will participate. \$5 (includes three taste tickets; additional tickets, \$1 each). McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. **703-790-0123**.

March 7. 7:30 p.m. or

March 8. 10:30 a.m. Getting the Best Prices for Prescription Drugs. Learn how to get the lowest prices on prescription drugs using the Internet. Sessions are taught by Howard Houghton, Virginia Insurance Counseling and Assistance Program (VICAP) coordinator, from the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging. Sherwood Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria. To register, call **703-765-3645**.

March 9. 6:30 p.m. Preventing Falls. The Parkinson Foundation of the National Capitol Area will feature a program by Anne-Marie Barry, physical therapist. Light refreshments. Epiphany Byzantine Church, 3410 Woodburn Rd., Annandale. Call **703-891-0821**.

March 12. 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Spring Lawn Care. Mike Goatley, head of Virginia Tech's Turf Department, shares the latest information on growing lush lawns. \$10.

Green Spring Gardens Park, 4603 Green Spring Rd., Alexandria. To register, call **703-642-5173**.

March 12. 8:00 p.m. A Night at the Opera. Performed by Choralis with selections by Bizet, Offenbach, and Sondheim. The annual gala silent auction begins at 7:00 p.m. Falls Church Presbyterian Church, 225 E. Broad St., Falls Church. \$30 premium; \$25 regular; and \$20/seniors/students. Call **703-237-2499**.

March 13. 1:00-2:00 p.m. Housing and Care Options as We Age. Join Steve Gurney, founder/publisher of *Guide to Retirement Living*, as he shares information and resources to assist you and your family. McLean Bible Church, 8925 Leesburg Pike, Tysons Corner. For information, call Pamela Gill, **703-770-8672**.

March 15. 1:00 p.m. The Mount Vernon Genealogical Society will feature Antiquary Photography, by Dan Dennison, a renowned 1890-1920 photo collector and expert restorer. Bring your old photos to be analyzed. Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Rd., Rm. 112, Alexandria. Call Harold McClendon at **703-360-0920**.

March 20. 2:00-4:00 p.m. Fairfax Elderhostel Alumni Association. Four Elderhostelers will share their trip experiences. Light refreshments. George

Mason Library, 7001 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. For reservations, call Rebecca Prather at **703-534-2274**.

March 22 & 24. 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. AARP Driver Safety Program. With aging, changes occur in hearing, vision, flexibility and reaction time. Learn to adjust your skills to compensate for these changes. Update your knowledge of the rules of the road. Advance registration in person or a completed form to Reston Community Center, 2310 Colts Neck Rd., Reston. \$10 payable to AARP day of class. For form or information, call **703-476-4500**.